

*Procedure and Organization*

are not in the country serious differences of opinion which must be resolved? Do we not recognize that the fights that take place in this chamber are brought about because we reflect the intensity of the feeling that exists in a nation like Canada.

Hon. members on the other side of the chamber say that Great Britain has adopted rules similar to those we are discussing. How ignorant of history can they be? Great Britain is not Canada, and Canada is not Great Britain. We are a country only 100 years old. We are just learning to live together. It is here that the warfare is conducted, because parliament in a way is war. We are concerned with very serious business; this is not a gentlemen's club. We come here with fire in us and fight to resolve the grievances of the people. It is to the glory of English speaking people that they have devised an institution for resolving difficulties without people going around cutting each other's throats. Parliament is a substitution for war and rebellion, and we must recognize it as such.

We must have freedom in this institution to express differences and resolve them. When a government brings in measures such as 75c it is an indication of their impatience and lack of understanding of what goes on in this nation. The government is not interested in resolving problems; it is interested in suppressing the opposition and not bringing controversial issues to the surface. This is a short-sighted approach, because if these issues are not brought to the surface here they will surface somewhere else.

If we consider the British House of Commons, we can more clearly understand the nature of this institution. I sometimes think we should have, as they have in Westminster, two lines running down the chamber the distance of two swords apart. This is to indicate the true nature of the Commons and how we have learned to live with serious differences and resolve them.

• (3:10 p.m.)

I said earlier that there is a psychology to this house and that this house knows when the government measures are good and when they are bad. On occasions when the government is strong, the opposition knows it. When the government is weak and is falling apart, the opposition also knows it. It has been said during the course of Canadian history that it is not the opposition that defeats governments, it is governments that defeat themselves; the opposition merely puts them out of their misery.

[Mr. Saltzman.]

I suspect that what the government is trying to do is to head off the inevitable. I ask myself, as has every member who has spoken, why do they want rule 75c? What real difference is 75c going to make to them? After all, they have not used closure at any time because they know what happens when closure is applied. One measure is passed, but what happens to the rest of the legislative program? Why do they really want rule 75c? Obviously they have not needed it all year. They are not even pretending to make a case that they need rule 75c because of what has happened in parliament this year. If you press them hard enough, they say, "we might need it in the future, and therefore we had better be prepared for that future". I suspect that there is fear in their bones, like the fear of an ageing lover afraid of losing the favours of his mistress, the public. This year the government has had a honeymoon because the country wanted their Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to be given a chance. I suspect they know now that the honeymoon is over; the glamour is gone and the government must live by achievements instead of words or fancy gestures. They can survive only on the basis of a legislative program. So what they are trying to do is to bring in rules that will prevent their demise, and rule 75c is that kind of rule.

This rule is a foolish Maginot line the government is building because it can be outflanked and skirted, as only members of parliament know how to do. Or is the great Liberal party trying to be what it has been in the past, all things to all people? Is it trying to avoid a polarization of opinion in this country, by having members make great Liberal speeches about what we should do about poverty, about this, that and the other, and then having members vote the other way?

**Mr. Pepin:** I thought you were that kind of people.

**Mr. Saltzman:** We hear an intervention from the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin). No, it is the Liberal party which is that way and which likes that pattern of Liberalism while they pursue reactionary policies. With measures like rule 75c, under which a debate can be closed, they can put more of their own restless backbenchers into the debate. It will give their backbenchers an opportunity to make flaming, progressive speeches and then, when the vote is taken those members will quietly vote with